Discussion

Principally, Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of Claim 2 and a portion of the limitations of Claim 3. Claim 2 has been deleted and consequential amendments have been made to Claim 3 and to Claim 6. In doing so, the informalities respecting antecedents referenced by the examiner under 35 USC 112 have been addressed. Paragraph [0024] of the disclosure has also been amended to ensure that there are antecedents in the disclosure to the language used in the claims.

The examiner applied a number of prior patents as references under 35 USC 102 . It is believed that the claims no longer can be objected to on this basis. Claim 1 specifically includes the limitation that tabs are present:

> "...**on either side of said split to register with the outlet aperture of the next adjacent link and extend along the sides of the adjacent link to which (the link) is mated, ..., said tabs serving to hold said link ends together, upon assembly of the chain, by their engagement with opposite sides of the adjacent link. "**.

This feature is not present in any of the cited references.

Goldman shows a nipple 8, but a nipple does not qualify as a "tab". Further, the nipple in Goldman does not span the split in the link as now stipulated in Claim 1.

Riess does show tabs 3, 4, but these tabs do not meet the limitation quoted above. The tabs in Riess lie in the plane of each link. Therefore they do not: " extend along the sides of the adjacent link to which it is mated". In fact, the tabs in Riess extend into the internal passageway in the next adjacent link, interfering with the routing of any electrical wire to be passed therethrough. This is a significant deficiency in the arrangement described by Riess.

The examiner has also cited Park and Erikson. However, the claims, particularly with Claim 1 as amended, neither read on the configurations disclosed in these two references, nor on any obvious variant on those references. Rather, the claims are directed to a distinct arrangement, which overcomes deficiencies present in the prior art and provides a new and useful configuration for concealing an electrical conductor within a chain suited for hanging a chandelier.

On this basis, the applicant asks that the examiner reconsider this application, rendering a favourable ruling that will allow this application to proceed to allowance.

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Schedule A to the Response of December 13, 2004 SN: 10/617,179

[0024] Each link 16 is **preferably** formed from somewhat flexible metal tubing, which may be stainless steel or brass. In the vertically hanging orientation as shown, each link **16** has:

a) an upper end and a lower end bounding a central opening surrounded by the link 16;
b) an inside surface facing into said central opening;
c) two outside sides positioned laterally on either side of said inside surface and directed outwardly from said central opening
d) a tubular portion within the link 16 serving as a passageway through which a conductor can pass through the length of the link 16,
e) an inlet aperture 20 and an outlet aperture 22 for the passage of the conductors, said inlet and outlet apertures 20, 22 being located at opposite ends of each link 16, both apertures being located on the inside surface of the link 16, spanning between the side surfaces of each link 16 with at least one of said apertures 20, 22 spanning said split, and
f) dual tabs 26 extending from the inside surface of each link 16 towards said central opening, positioned adjacent the inlet aperture 20 of said link 16, one on either side of said split to register with the outlet aperture 22 of the next adjacent link 16 and extend respectively along the sides of said adjacent link 16 to which it is mated,

the arrangement of the chain being such that with the chain hanging vertically with the links 16 mated to each other, an outlet aperture 22 at the end of one, upper link underlies and registers with an inlet aperture 20 at the end of the next adjacent, lower link 16, so that a conductor can pass through of the outlet aperture 22 of said upper link, through the tubular passageway portion of said one link and then through the inlet aperture 20 of the adjacent link 16 substantially without being

exposed to view. [~~an~~]**The** inlet aperture 20 **formed** on [~~its~~] **the** inside surface **of each link** at its upper end, **is suitably dimensioned** [~~suitable~~] for receiving a cable inserted into the hollow interior of the tubing, and **each link 16** has a similar outlet aperture 22, also on its inside surface, at its lower end. The inlet and outlet apertures 20 and 22 of one link thus face each other across the center of the link, **both apertures spanning between the side surfaces of each link.**. Each link is split at its upper center as shown at 24 in Fig.3 **with at least one of said apertures spanning the split**, and, as may be seen in the enlarged Fig.3a, at the mating ends of the link one end of the tubing has a spigot 24a which registers within a rebate at the other end. The inlet aperture 20 is formed by matching recesses provided in the lower portions of these mating ends, and projecting from the sides of these recesses are tabs 26 which, upon assembly of the chain, engage the sides of the outlet aperture 22 of the next, **mated,** upper link as shown at the lower end of Fig.3 and in Fig.3a. These tabs 26 thus hold the ends of the links together when the chain is fully assembled **by their engagement with opposite sides of the adjacent link**.

Schedule B to the Response of December 13, 2004 SN: 10/617,179

1. A chain for suspending an article needing a supply of electricity, and for concealing electrical conductors leading to said article, comprising **[[:]]** a series of interlocking links **including first and second links that are adjacent and mated to each other**, each link having:

a) **an upper end and a lower end bounding a central opening surrounded by the link,**

b) **an inside surface facing into said central opening,**

c) **two outside surfaces positioned laterally on either side of said inside surface and directed outwardly from said central opening,**

d) **a split in the link providing link ends,**

e) a tubular **[~~portion~~] passageway** through which a conductor can pass through the length of the link **[~~each link having~~]**,

f) an inlet aperture and an outlet aperture for **the passage of** the conductors, said inlet and outlet apertures being located at opposite ends of **[~~the~~] each** link, **[~~and~~]** both apertures being **located** on the inside **surface** of the link, **spanning between the side surfaces of each link with at least one of said apertures spanning said split,**

g) **dual tabs extending from the inside surface of each link towards said central opening, positioned adjacent each inlet aperture of said link, one on either side of said split to register with the outlet aperture of the next adjacent link and extend respectively along the sides of the adjacent link to which it is mated,**

the arrangement **of the chain** being such that with the chain hanging vertically **with the links mated to each other**, an outlet aperture at the **[~~lower~~]** end of **one [~~an upper~~]** link **is in [~~underlies and~~]** register**[s]** with an inlet aperture at the **[~~upper~~]** end of the next **adjacent [~~lower~~]** link, so that a conductor can pass **[~~upwardly out of~~] through** the outlet aperture of **one [each upper]** link**, through the tubular passageway of said one**

link and [~~into~~] through the inlet aperture of the adjacent [~~next lower~~] link substantially without being exposed to view, [~~the conductor then passing through the tubular portion of said next lower link to its outlet aperture and thence into a further lower link whereby a conductor can be substantially concealed from view when passing through the length of the chain~~], said tabs serving to hold said link ends together, upon assembly of the chain, by their engagement with the outside sides of the adjacent link. .

2. **(Canceled)**

3. **(Currently Amended)** A chain according to claim [~~2~~] 1, wherein each link of the chain [~~is split in the region of the inlet aperture, and~~] is sufficiently flexible to allow the [~~ends provided by said~~] split to be pulled apart for insertion of the conductor and for connection to the next upper link. [~~, said tabs serving to hold said ends together, upon assembly of the chain, by their engagement with opposite sides of the outlet aperture of said next upper link.~~]

4. A chain according to claim 3, wherein each link of the chain is identical.

5. A chain according to claim 1, wherein each link of the chain is hollow throughout its length, and whereby the electrical conductors of a cable can pass separately through opposite sides of a link.

6. **(Cancelled)**

7. A chain according to claim 3, wherein each link of the chain is hollow throughout its length, and whereby the electrical conductors of a cable can pass separately through opposite sides of a link.

8. A chain according to claim 4, wherein each link of the chain is hollow throughout its length, and whereby the electrical conductors of a cable can pass separately through opposite sides of a link.

9. A suspension assembly for suspending an article needing a supply of electricity, and for concealing electrical conductors leading to said article, said assembly including a chain according to claim 1, and further comprising:

a fitting for an end of the chain which includes a threaded bushing having a side recess capable of accommodating both an end link of the chain and cable leading to the adjacent aperture in said end link, and further comprising upper and lower sleeve parts arranged to mate together while accommodating both said end link and said cable.